

VLR-11/5/68 NRHP-11/25/69

Form 10-300
(Dec. 1968)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Virginia	
COUNTY: Hampton (in cit.)	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:

Fort Wool

AND/OR HISTORIC:

Fort Calhoun

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Located on an island one mile south of Fort Monroe at the entrance to Hampton Roads between Willoughby Spit and Old Point Comfort.

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE

Virginia

CODE

45

COUNTY:

Hampton

CODE

650

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS		ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC	
District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Building <input type="checkbox"/>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>		
Site <input type="checkbox"/>	Structure <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input type="checkbox"/>	In Process <input type="checkbox"/>	Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted <input type="checkbox"/>		
Object <input type="checkbox"/>		Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Preservation work in progress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/>		
					No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	Comments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	To be developed
Educational <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	Vacant	as recreation
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>		area.

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:

Commonwealth of Virginia

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Richmond

STATE:

Virginia

CODE

45

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Clerk's Office

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Hampton

STATE

Virginia

CODE

45

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 15

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Report #114-1

DATE OF SURVEY:

Federal ☐

State ☒

County ☐

Local ☐

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:

Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN:

Richmond,

STATE:

Virginia

CODE

45

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Virginia	COUNTY: Hampton (in cit.)	ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
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FOR NPS USE ONLY

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Fort Wool is located on a fifteen acre island made of large granite blocks. The western end of the fort still retains its original ramparts, consisting of a close packed semi-circle of gun positions. Batterys dating from the Civil War period still remain on the southwest end of the island; however, the remainder of the southern wall has been demolished, leaving an open side. Granite blocks on the southern side were pushed into the water to form a rough causeway that links the island with the southern ventilation entrance of the Hampton Roads Tunnel. The rectangular open space within the fort's walls was originally the parade ground. The two towers at either end of the island date from World War I, while the concrete tower in the center dates from World War II.

On the northern side, facing Fort Monroe, were placed the bulk of the guns in the nineteenth century, however the original battery positions in this wall have been obscured by later works. Also, the fittings and emplacements along this side have been altered to hold newer types of guns. Most of the original passages in the massive walls remain as do the powder and storage rooms, shelters for the gun crews, and lower tier gun positions. On the eastern end of the island a World War II concrete command post with bunker has been constructed behind the redoubts.

At present, the fort lies abandoned, but even in its decaying state it has become an exceedingly romantic ruin.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☐ 18th Century ☐ 20th Century ☐
 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☐ 19th Century ☒

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal	Education	Political	Urban Planning
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Phi-	Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Historic <input type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input type="checkbox"/>	losophy	History
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Science	
Art <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Landscape	Sculpture	
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture	Social/Human-	
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature	itarian	
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military	Theater	
	Music	Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

Fort Wool, or Fort Calhoun as it was known until the Civil War, was begun in 1819 as part of the elaborate coastal fortification plan (which included Fort Monroe) of George Graham, Secretary of War under James Madison. The Virginia General Assembly of 1821 resolved that the island's title would be turned over to the United States Government as long as it was needed for national defense, reverting to the Commonwealth of Virginia when no longer needed.

Work on the fortification continued at a slow rate until the outbreak of the Civil War. Robert E. Lee actually supervised part of the construction at one time. By the outbreak of the war the lower tier had fifty-two casemates ready for guns, and 187 men stationed there. In 1862 the name of the fort was changed from Fort Calhoun to Fort Wool in honor of Major General John Wool, Commandant of the fortifications at Hampton Roads. It was from Fort Wool that President Abraham Lincoln watched the embarkation of the Union troops to seize Norfolk. From 1886 until the outbreak of World War I the fort was not garrisoned, but was reactivated during both World Wars as part of the harbor defense system. The fort was abandoned by 1953 and was turned back to the Commonwealth in 1967.

The fort at present is falling into a state of ruins, but in so doing it is acquiring a very romantic atmosphere. This atmosphere, coupled with the wide variety of military architecture found there, make it a prime site for potential visitors. Its long history and beautiful location in the mouth of one of the world's busiest harbors also contribute to making it a significant landmark.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

FOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bowman, Albert, SP4, "Hampton Roads' Forgotten Fort," Casement Chronicle, May 12, 1967, Fort Monroe, Va.
 Analysis of Existing Facilities, Fort Wool, Virginia, 1945 (from the Norfolk District, Corps of Engineers).
 Feild, Robert, and Doug Michels, Fort Wool, 1968.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE			
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	36° 59' 14"	76° 18' 10"	36	59	12
NE	36° 59' 14"	76° 18' 00"			
SE	36° 59' 10"	76° 18' 00"			
SW	36° 59' 10"	76° 18' 10"			

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:	
Staff, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, James W. Moody, Jr., Director	
ORGANIZATION:	DATE
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission	May 7, 1969
STREET AND NUMBER:	
Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building	
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE
Richmond	Virginia
	CODE
	45

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐

Name

Edw. P. Alexander, Jr.
 Dr. Edward P. Alexander, Chairman
 Title Virginia Historic Landmarks Comm.

Date June 2, 1969

11/5/68

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

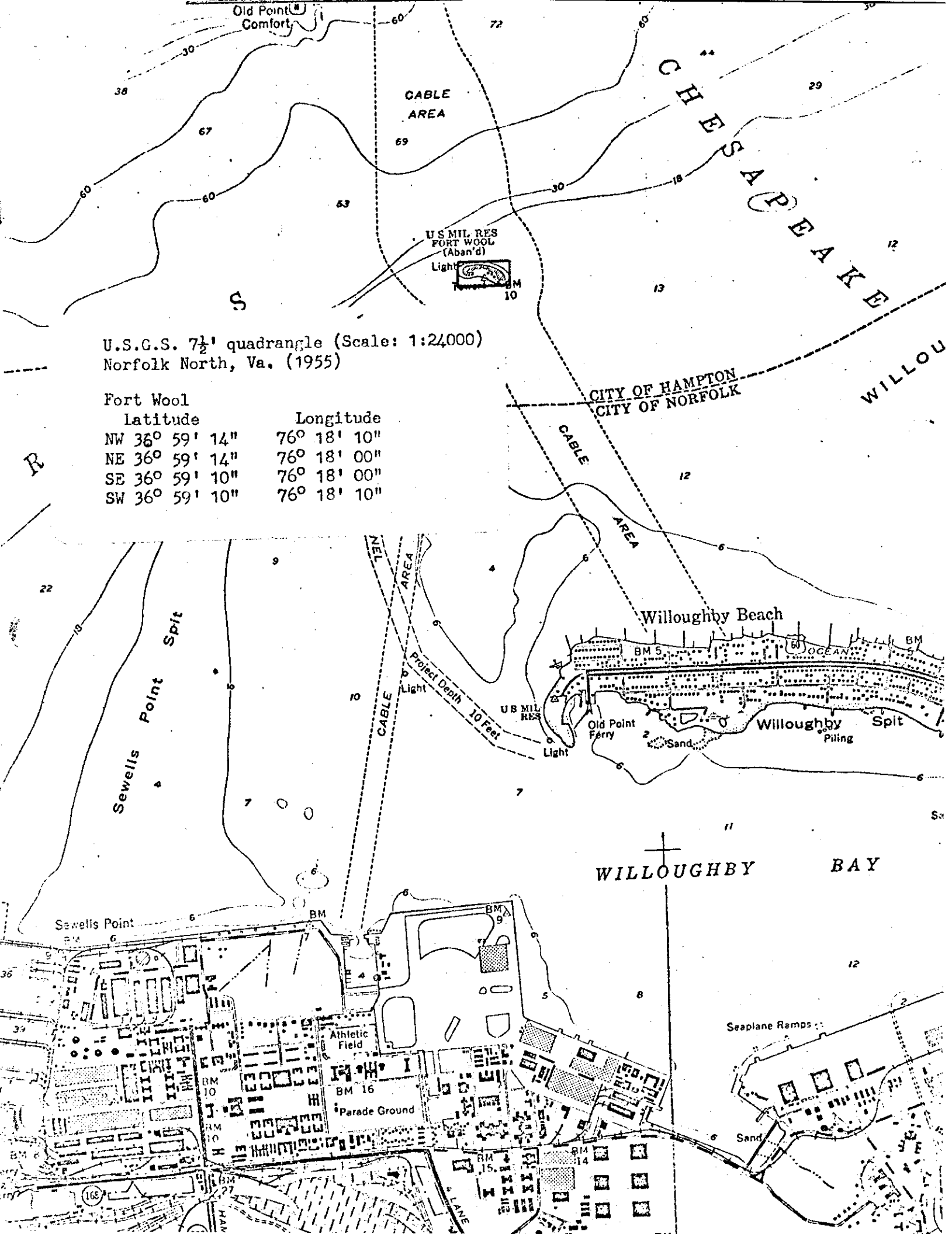
NOV 25 1969

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

NOV 25 1969



U.S.G.S. 7 1/2' quadrangle (Scale: 1:24,000)
Norfolk North, Va. (1955)

Fort Wool

Latitude	Longitude
NW 36° 59' 14"	76° 18' 10"
NE 36° 59' 14"	76° 18' 00"
SE 36° 59' 10"	76° 18' 00"
SW 36° 59' 10"	76° 18' 10"